

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE  
EASTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA

Alexandria Division

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	)	
	)	
v.	)	
	)	Case No. 1:22-cr-92
ALLISON FLUKE-EKREN,	)	
a/k/a “Allison Ekren,”	)	Hon. Leonie M. Brinkema
a/k/a “Umm Mohammed al-Amriki,”	)	
a/k/a “Umm Mohammed,”	)	Sentencing: October 25, 2022
	)	
Defendant.	)	

**UNITED STATES’ POSITION ON SENTENCING**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

Allison Fluke-Ekren brainwashed young girls and trained them to kill. She carved a path of terror, plunging her own children into unfathomable depths of cruelty by physically, psychologically, emotionally, and sexually abusing them. For at least eight years, Fluke-Ekren committed terrorist acts on behalf of three foreign terrorist organizations across war zones in Libya, Iraq, and Syria. She wanted to carry out mass casualty attacks in the United States. Fluke-Ekren ascended the ranks of ISIS by skillfully using manipulation and exploitation. She ultimately led an ISIS battalion and trained over 100 women and young girls in Syria, some as young as 10-years-old, on the use of AK-47 assault rifles, grenades, and suicide belts packed with explosives, during the terrorist organization’s murderous crusade.

Twenty years in prison is insufficient to fully account for her monstrous acts of terror and the immeasurable damage that she has caused to countless individuals across the globe, including her own children. But it is the statutory maximum penalty in this case, and based on all of the sentencing factors, the appropriate and just sentence that this Court should impose.

## **II. SENTENCING GUIDELINES**

In accordance with the Plea Agreement entered in this case, the government agrees with the U.S. Probation Office that the following provisions of the Guidelines apply:

- The Base Offense Level is 26 pursuant to U.S.S.G. § 2M5.3(a) because Fluke-Ekren's offense of conviction involved a conspiracy to provide material support or resources to a designated foreign terrorist organization, namely, ISIS.
- A 12-level enhancement applies pursuant to U.S.S.G. § 3A1.4(a) because Fluke-Ekren's offense of conviction is a felony that involved, or was intended to promote, a federal crime of terrorism.
- A 4-level enhancement applies pursuant to U.S.S.G. § 3B1.1(a) because Fluke-Ekren was a leader and organizer of an extensive criminal enterprise that involved, in this case, Fluke-Ekren training over 100 women and young girls on behalf of ISIS.
- A 2-level enhancement applies pursuant to U.S.S.G. § 2M5.3(b) because Fluke-Ekren's offense of conviction involved the provision of firearms and explosives.

Pursuant to Section 3E1.1(b), the government moves the Court to grant the defendant an additional one-level reduction in the offense level for acceptance of responsibility. Factoring in these reductions, the government agrees with the U.S. Probation Office that the Guidelines are properly calculated in the Presentence Investigation Report ("PSR") at Level 41 and Criminal History Category VI, resulting in an advisory sentencing range of 240 months' imprisonment. PSR ¶¶ 66, 72. Additionally, Congress has prescribed a statutory maximum penalty of 20 years' imprisonment for conspiring to provide material support or resources to ISIS. *Id.* ¶ 147.

## **III. THE STATUTORY MAXIMUM SENTENCE IS WARRANTED IN THIS CASE UNDER THE SECTION 3553(a) SENTENCING FACTORS**

After calculating the appropriate advisory Guidelines range, a sentencing court must "determine whether a sentence within that range . . . serves the factors set forth in § 3553(a) and, if not, select a sentence [within statutory limits] that does serve those factors." *United States v. Green*, 436 F.3d 449, 456 (4th Cir. 2006). Section 3553(a)(1) provides that, in determining a

sentence, courts must consider the nature and circumstances of the offense, as well as the history and characteristics of the defendant.<sup>1</sup> Additional factors set forth in § 3553(a)(2) include the need for the sentence to reflect the seriousness of the offense, to promote respect for the law, and to provide just punishment for the offense; to afford adequate deterrence to criminal conduct; to protect the public from further crimes of the defendant; and to provide the defendant with needed educational or vocational training, medical care, or other correctional treatment in the most effective manner. Based on a careful consideration of those factors, the imposition of the statutory maximum sentence for Fluke-Ekren is appropriate and just.

**A. The History & Characteristics of Fluke-Ekren: How a Kansas-born Woman Blazed a Trail of Terror from Overbrook to Cairo to Benghazi to Raqqa**

***1. Fluke-Ekren's Family, Childhood, and Educational Opportunities***

Allison Fluke-Ekren, a 42-year-old U.S. citizen, was born in Lawrence, Kansas. She grew up in a picturesque and bucolic environment in Overbrook, Kansas on an 81-acre farm that has been in her family since 1880.<sup>2</sup> Fluke-Ekren and her 41-year-old brother were raised in a

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<sup>1</sup> Courts have routinely noted that this statutory command requires the consideration of uncharged conduct about the defendant's past actions. *See, e.g., Pepper v. United States*, 562 U.S. 476, 488 (2011) (a sentencing court is permitted to "consider the widest possible breadth of information about a defendant"); *United States v. Elbaz*, 39 F.4th 214, 229 (4th Cir. 2022) (same); *United States v. Brown*, 816 F. App'x 240, 247 (11th Cir. 2020) (noting that the district court "was required to consider what [the government] learned about [the defendant's] past conduct, even if uncharged, as part of the 'nature and circumstances' of the charged conduct and [the defendant's] 'history and characteristics'"); *United States v. Chavez-Calderon*, 494 F.3d 1266, 1270 (10th Cir. 2007) ("The sentencing court is well within its discretion and, indeed, is required to carefully consider the facts contained in the PSR when evaluating the § 3553(a) sentencing factors, including the history and characteristics of the defendant . . . ." (quoting *United States v. Mateo*, 471 F.3d 1162, 1167 (10th Cir. 2006))).

<sup>2</sup> Undersigned counsel visited Fluke-Ekren's childhood home with the FBI in September 2022 to conduct witness interviews in preparation for the upcoming sentencing hearing. Photographs from that visit of this idyllic property, along with reports summarizing interviews with Fluke-Ekren's family members and associates (some of which are incorporated in this section of the sentencing memorandum, including quoted statements, to supplement the information contained

loving and stable home where all of their needs were met. Fluke-Ekren's parents noted that she was surrounded by family and friends who cared for her.

Fluke-Ekren's grandfather was in the Navy during World War II on the USS West Point, moving troops across the Pacific Ocean. The defendant's grandfather passed away in 2007 and, according to the defendant's father, "was sick of watching her manipulate people and not take advantage of the opportunities she was provided." Fluke-Ekren's father was born in Kansas, and attended college at the University of Kansas to study English. He served in Vietnam as a U.S. Army military advisor to a Vietnamese Army strike force in the vicinity of the Mekong River. After completing his military service, Fluke-Ekren's father worked in construction in the Topeka, Kansas area, and is now a retired farmer. Fluke-Ekren's mother is a retired teacher.

Fluke-Ekren's parents provided their two children with ample educational opportunities to succeed. Given their intelligence and status as "gifted children," they sent Fluke-Ekren and her brother to Topeka Collegiate, a secular school where students' standardized test scores place them among the highest-achieving independent school students in the nation. Fluke-Ekren's parents paid the tuition for this college preparatory school despite their modest finances.

Notwithstanding this positive upbringing, when one of Fluke-Ekren's daughters asked her to recall the "good times" in her adolescent years, Fluke-Ekren said that she once tried to

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in ¶¶ 77-129 of the PSR), were immediately provided to the defense and the U.S. Probation Office. It is well-known to courts, probation officers, and those who have worked on cases involving this subject matter, that speaking about the horrors of being physically and sexually abused is extremely difficult for any victim. While the abuse-related information learned during these recent interviews was disclosed for the first time to the federal government last month, Fluke-Ekren's children previously disclosed this information in private communications with medical professionals, family members, and others. And as the Fourth Circuit has made clear, "a district court may consider criminal activity of a defendant that was not relevant conduct as part of the history of the defendant." *United States v. Fernandez*, 581 F. App'x 221, 224 (4th Cir. 2014) (citing *United States v. Rhine*, 637 F.3d 525, 528-29 (5th Cir. 2011)); see *United States v. Blake*, 565 F. App'x 241, 244 (4th Cir. 2014) (same).

drown her brother in an icy lake. PSR at page 42. Fluke-Ekren laughed while recounting this story, even while she was looking back on this twisted memory in her mid-‘30s in Syria, and continued to reminisce about other times that she tormented her brother “for fun.” *Id.*

Fortunately, Fluke-Ekren’s brother is alive and thriving as an Information Technology business professional—while his only sibling, who grew up with the same parents, in the same home, with the same educational opportunities—now stands before this Court as a convicted global terrorist.

## ***2. Fluke-Ekren’s Teenage Years and First Marriage***

Fluke-Ekren, who was described by her father as a “difficult teenager,” was expelled from high school during her sophomore year because she stopped attending. Fluke-Ekren told her friends that her plan was to get pregnant and then get married. She started working as a waitress at a local restaurant and soon met her first husband, whom she married in the fall of 1996. In January of the following year, the defendant’s first child was born, followed by her second child approximately eleven months later. Fluke-Ekren’s mother noted that the defendant “took advantage of her first husband.” He worked hard to provide for their family, including holding down multiple jobs to ensure the defendant could attend the University of Kansas.

After obtaining her General Educational Development (GED) credential, Fluke-Ekren enrolled at the University of Kansas in the fall of 1998. One day, when their two children were approximately five and four-years old, Fluke-Ekren’s first husband came home from work to find that she had packed up and taken the kids, leaving him in over \$12,000 in debt. Nonetheless, he always paid Fluke-Ekren child support. Their divorce was finalized in early 2002. Fluke-Ekren’s mother stated that the defendant had an “absolute iron will and will do almost anything to get what she wants, no matter what.” Fluke-Ekren’s father recalled that the defendant was physically abusive toward her children, dating back to her time in Kansas.

Fluke-Ekren's first husband described the defendant as a "con artist" who was "always manipulative" and "could lie with no tells." He said that their son "caught a lot of both verbal and physical abuse" from her. He noted that Fluke-Ekren was "always attracted to power and authority" and "wanted to have control over everything." He added that she was self-centered and "had a way of constantly making you feel you were not good enough and never could be." Summarizing her character, he stated, "something is deeply broken inside that woman."

***3. Fluke-Ekren Begins to Engage in Physical, Psychological, Emotional, and Sexual Abuse of her own Children in Kansas***

*"I spent the first 14 years of my life with my mother, including several years overseas. Of course I know her well, as anyone knows the one who raised them. I know that she is going to say [her second husband] was responsible for everything, that she is a victim, and that she only did what she had to in order to survive, and protect her family. She is lying. My mother is a monster who enjoys torturing children for sexual pleasure. My mother is a monster very skilled in manipulation and controlling her emotions to her advantage. My mother is a monster without love for her children, without an excuse for her actions."*

*-The defendant's son, who plans to attend the sentencing*

In a letter to the Court dated September 19, 2022, Fluke-Ekren's son described the defendant's ruthless and vile conduct even before she led an ISIS battalion. He recounted being physically, psychologically, emotionally, and sexually abused by her for many years, which is relevant to the sentencing factors under 18 U.S.C. §§ 3553(a) and 3661.<sup>3</sup>

Fluke-Ekren's son stated that his mother enjoyed inflicting torture and hurting people, even her own children. The more her children reacted to the pain, the worse the abuse would get. "The only time there was relief was when we were in the presence of an outsider. But even then, when we were alone in the house, or she thought she could get away with it, the torture

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<sup>3</sup> Given that Fluke-Ekren's son will not be permitted to address the Court during the October 25, 2022 sentencing hearing (*see* Dkt. No. 37 at 40; Dkt. No. 50 at 2), which he fully understands, he respectfully requested the government to include the contents of his September 19, 2022 letter in this sentencing memorandum. He does not object to the parties or the Court using his full name during the upcoming hearing.

would begin.” PSR at page 38. Fluke-Ekren meted out various methods of physical abuse on her son, including putting salt or other chemicals in his cuts or injuries, punching him in the face, throwing him on the floor, and kicking him so hard that he coughed up blood. He recalled that the defendant could make the pain worse by focusing in on the same place. “She was usually good at not leaving marks that couldn't be blamed on me, but most of all she was good at manipulating others whenever they should have started getting a clue.” *Id.* When he was about four-years-old, his vision went black after Fluke-Ekren caused intense pain to his testicles.

When he was a minor, Fluke-Ekren often locked her son in tight spaces for long enough that he would have no choice but to urinate or defecate on himself. He recalled that, when he was four-years-old, it was the first time that he could properly articulate her abuse towards him. After Fluke-Ekren returned to pick him up from a family member's residence and learned that he had talked about what she was doing to him, she became enraged, dragged him to a private area of the house, and strangled him into unconsciousness. “Had she known you are supposed to keep strangling after someone loses consciousness, I would have died. This would not be the last time she attempted to murder me in a fit of rage. Punishment for trying to tell others what was going on was always the most extreme.” *Id.* at 39.

Fluke-Ekren's son stated that when he was approximately seven-years-old, the defendant broke his approximately one-year-old brother's arm after he threw a tantrum and tossed Spaghetti-O's on the floor. “She blamed me for it. Her stories were varied depending on who she was talking to and in what context. From that I had broken it myself, to that it was neglect on my part that had resulted in his arm being broken. This became one of the stories she would use for the rest of my life to de-legitimize me to others in preparation for my snitching, and one of the things she would ‘punish’ me for later.” *Id.*

Fluke-Ekren's son described his mother as "having a systemized method to turn people evil." He noted that she would try to persuade his father to physically abuse him, and would call him a bad father if he did not hit him. However, he stated that his father never succumbed to his mother's perverse desires and never abused him, which is in stark contrast to the abhorrent treatment that he endured at Fluke-Ekren's hands.

Similarly, one of Fluke-Ekren's daughters recalled in her September 23, 2022 letter<sup>4</sup> to the Court: "My first memory is from when I was about 3 or 4 years old, wherein I was being molested by my mother in a bathroom . . . Around the same time, I have memories of my mother clocking me on the head with a metal hairbrush for having tangled hair." PSR at page 42. As described in her September 23, 2022 letter and throughout the PSR, this was unfortunately only the beginning of the severe and continuous abuse that Fluke-Ekren inflicted upon her.

#### ***4. Fluke-Ekren's Second Marriage and Self-Radicalization***

According to both her father and a former longtime close friend,<sup>5</sup> Fluke-Ekren converted to Islam while attending the University of Kansas. On or about April 23, 2002, Fluke-Ekren married her second husband, whom she met in college. He was approximately 19-years-old at the time and was her laboratory partner there. She gave birth to their first child (Fluke-Ekren's

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<sup>4</sup> Fluke-Ekren's daughter respectfully requested the government to include the contents of her September 23, 2022 letter in this sentencing memorandum. This is especially important to her because, pursuant to the Court's Order (*See* Dkt. No. 50 at 2), she understands that she must limit her in-court victim allocution to how the defendant's 18 U.S.C. § 2339B conduct affected her. She does not object to the parties or the Court using her full name during the October 25, 2022 sentencing hearing.

<sup>5</sup> Undersigned counsel, the FBI, and the assigned U.S. Probation Officer interviewed Fluke-Ekren's former longtime friend on September 9, 2022. She first met Fluke-Ekren approximately 20 years ago and interacted with her on a regular basis while they were both in the United States, Egypt, and Turkey. At her request, her name is not included in this sentencing memorandum, but is included in the sealed PSR at ¶ 129.



third child) shortly thereafter—the same daughter that she later molested, as described above, and who intends to speak at the sentencing hearing. Fluke-Ekren and her second husband had five additional children together, and the defendant adopted another child after the child’s parents were killed as suicide bombers in Syria.<sup>6</sup>

Fluke-Ekren’s parents believe that Fluke-Ekren radicalized her second husband, who ultimately ascended through the ranks of ISIS and became the *emir* (leader) of ISIS snipers in Syria. According to Fluke-Ekren’s father, her second husband “was good and faithful, kind and generous, to everyone” while the couple lived in Kansas. Fluke-Ekren’s mother called him a “gentle person” while in Kansas, and noted that he did not have the same drive to excel as Fluke-Ekren did. Fluke-Ekren’s son stated that her second husband “was a decent person when they first met,” adding that he was “extremely naïve, and ignorant of things, but he had decent intentions at first.” PSR at page 39.

However, according to Fluke-Ekren’s father, Fluke-Ekren “was predisposed to zealotry” and was often looking for people to give her a difficult time for being Muslim. He explained that Fluke-Ekren wanted people to be disparaging and invited negative comments about her religion so she could be aggressive towards them. According to Fluke-Ekren’s former longtime friend, her second husband came from a secular family and Fluke-Ekren was proud that he became religious because of her.

The government anticipates that the defense will focus on what appears to be an isolated, but unfortunate, incident that occurred between Fluke-Ekren and her second husband in the summer of 2005. PSR ¶ 87. To be clear, any form of domestic violence is inexcusable.

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<sup>6</sup> Fluke-Ekren had three additional children in Syria with her fourth husband, a now-deceased ISIS military leader who was responsible for ISIS’s defense of Raqqa beginning in 2017. PSR ¶ 103. In total, Fluke-Ekren gave birth to 11 children and adopted one child. Two of those 12 children died in Syria. *Id.* ¶¶ 103, 124.

However, that single incident, which resulted in a pretrial diversion agreement, occurred over three years prior to Fluke-Ekren's initial travel overseas in 2008, over six years before Fluke-Ekren's involvement in the aftermath of the Benghazi terrorist attacks in 2011, approximately nine years before the earliest ISIS-related conduct set forth in the signed Statement of Facts (2014), and 14 years prior to the end of the ISIS-related conduct (2019) charged in this case. The incident is entirely unrelated to Fluke-Ekren's vast terrorism-related conduct that occurred years later and continued, nearly unabated, throughout her time overseas. As Fluke-Ekren's daughter wrote in her September 23, 2022 letter with unmistakable clarity: "My mother controlled [her second husband], not the other way around. [He] actively disapproved of what Allison would do in terms of starting a battalion and would often get in the way. This is why the most successful attempt of Allison's battalion, Khatiba Nusaybah, was after [he] had died." PSR at page 51.

Moreover, Fluke-Ekren's former longtime friend stated that Fluke-Ekren admitted to medicating her second-husband using the drug Adderall® "to make him focus on what she wanted him to do," that Fluke-Ekren "led" him, that it was no secret Fluke-Ekren "was the brains behind all things," and that Fluke-Ekren was undeniably the "alpha" in their relationship. Fluke-Ekren's first husband said that she would "punch and slap him" during arguments. Fluke-Ekren's son observed that his mother "had a systematized method of gradually getting others to stoop to her level of malice," including telling her second husband that he was a bad father if he did not beat his kids. PSR at page 39.

In or around December 2006, Fluke-Ekren completed her schooling at the University of Kansas, where she studied biology. Shortly thereafter, Fluke-Ekren obtained a position teaching math and science at a school in Wichita, Kansas. In June 2007, she attended a graduate teaching program at Earlham College in Richmond, Indiana. In August 2008, Fluke-Ekren decided to

move her family to Cairo, Egypt.

**5. Fluke-Ekren's Move to Egypt and the Continued Severe Abuse of her own Children**

*"My mother would beat my body, leaving my muscles cramping in agony. [She] would then go to her room and masturbate over the fact that she beat me. I could hear her from the other room. Sometimes it hurt so much that I couldn't move or cry. It was like I was frozen in time, for the purpose of feeling my body pulse with pain. I would often have bruises on my face of her fingers from being slapped so hard."*

*-Fluke-Ekren's daughter, who intends to speak at sentencing*

Fluke-Ekren's parents, son and daughter, and former longtime friend universally stated that Fluke-Ekren—and not her second husband—was the driving force behind their move overseas. According to her father and stepmother, Fluke-Ekren borrowed large sums of money to pay for her college and graduate schooling, which she never paid back. Instead, Fluke-Ekren decided to flee to Egypt to escape her debt in the United States. Fluke-Ekren's father and stepmother received demands from creditors to pay her outstanding debt. The PSR corroborates their assertions, as Fluke-Ekren's credit report lists \$86,817.00 in U.S. Department of Education student loans that are past due.

Fluke-Ekren's son, who was 11-years-old at the time, also stated that she was "the entire reason" the family moved to Egypt. He and others vividly recall her second husband repeatedly declining to move there initially, as he was employed as a medical technician at a hospital in Toledo, Ohio and did not have a job in Egypt. Similarly, Fluke-Ekren's former longtime friend stated that it did not make any sense for her second husband to move to Egypt. However, Fluke-Ekren's son stated that she "forced the issue, threatening to divorce him and take his children there" if he did not comply. PSR at page 40. Fluke-Ekren organized a strange birthday party for her son in Egypt, who was still a minor at the time. In describing the gathering, her former longtime friend wrote: "I found it odd that kids were playing like it was downtown Baghdad, the kids wore combat uniforms, she liked it (the setup was like a war-torn city). She [Fluke-Ekren]

was of the opinion this was a skill to be learned. So many odd details....”

Fluke-Ekren’s daughter observed that Fluke-Ekren “ruined” her second husband. She stated that Fluke-Ekren kicked him out of their house in Egypt and he soon became involved with a “bad crowd,” traveling to Libya to find some purpose in his life. With her father absent, Fluke-Ekren continued to abuse her own daughter, who was six-years-old when her family moved to Egypt, taking pleasure in her pain. Fluke-Ekren’s daughter stated that her mother had a “résumé of disruption” with people and that she did not abuse her kids because she was angry, but rather because she was bored. Fluke-Ekren identified what each child disliked the most, and inflicted her damage accordingly. Fluke-Ekren’s daughter considered herself a proud person and severely disliked being slapped with the back of the hand. Knowing this, Fluke-Ekren slapped her precisely in this manner. As described in the above-quoted excerpt from her daughter’s letter, Fluke-Ekren would slap her daughter hard enough in Egypt that it would leave bruise marks in the shape of Fluke-Ekren’s fingers on her cheeks. PSR at page 43.

Fluke-Ekren’s son similarly noted that she continued to severely abuse him in Egypt, describing a time when she defendant slammed his head into a concrete wall so hard that it chipped the wall, as well as psychological and emotional abuse in which she would call him a “piece of sh\*t” like his father. He never fought back against the abuse and stated that his mother wanted power and control, and to be in a position of respect and authority. He believes that Fluke-Ekren pressured and manipulated her second husband in order to increase her access to criminal activity. He further noted the Fluke-Ekren forced him to attend an extremist religious school during their second year in Egypt, and she would tell people that he was the product of her rape by an American soldier in order to increase her credibility in the religious community. He wanted to return sooner to the United States from Egypt, but felt guilt over having to leave

his siblings behind. He noted he wanted to be a big brother and protect them, but because of Fluke-Ekren's manipulative behavior, he was not believed when he told others about her abuse.

**6. *Fluke-Ekren Travels to Libya to “Pursue a Career in Terrorism”***

According to Fluke-Ekren's daughter, Fluke-Ekren abandoned a “slave” that she previously bought “to fend for herself in the streets of Egypt” because she wanted to “pursue a career in terrorism” in Libya. PSR at page 44. Fluke-Ekren's brainwashing of children, including her own, continued in full force there. As her daughter recounted, while watching the eighth season of the television show “24,” the protagonist—Jack Bauer—was frantically trying to save lives by dissuading a suicide bomber. Fluke-Ekren turned to her daughter and asked her who was the “good guy,” to which her daughter responded, “Jack Bauer.” However, as Fluke-Ekren's daughter wrote, “[s]he told me that I was wrong and that the good guy was, in fact, the suicide bomber.” *Id.* at 44-45.

It is in Libya where Fluke-Ekren's dogged pursuit to obtain positions of power and influence to train young women in extremist ideology and violence began. Fluke-Ekren's plans included using different husbands to advocate for approval of her military training plans from the leadership in the terrorist groups with whom she was associated overseas. Fluke-Ekren disguised those plans by initiating them as a school for young women or promoting the military training as necessary for self-defense.

According to her daughter, Fluke-Ekren's first attempt at initiating this type of training was in Libya in 2011. Fluke-Ekren found an abandoned school to use and obtained school supplies to initiate the training. Ironically, she selected the Arabic word “*Faruk*” as the school's name, which means “the one who distinguishes between right and wrong.” Fluke-Ekren wanted to use her second husband as her access point to leadership in Ansar al-Sharia in Libya to gain

approval and fund this training project. Fluke-Ekren's planned training of the children and young women was disguised as a school, but her true intent was to provide military training to conduct attacks. While the school was ultimately not successful in Libya, Fluke-Ekren's daughter recounted the training that Fluke-Ekren provided there: "She had a small group of children, ages ranging from 6-9. She would tell us that if we didn't kill the '*kuffar*' [non-believer] that we would be raped. She then would show us videos of Iraqi women getting raped by American soldiers. She would make us do exercises in the name of being fit enough to kill."

Fluke-Ekren's daughter noted that the defendant had other hobbies in Libya, including encouraging her second husband "to build a silencer so that he could kill whomever with it. She would stay up late, helping him and motivating him to finish the project. Allison would then talk about how she wanted to murder people with it." The defendant's daughter further described Fluke-Ekren's thirst for extreme violence while in Libya. While venturing off into the woods, Fluke-Ekren's daughter came across a metal barrel used for water storage that was three times the size of her body. As a curious nine-year-old child, she climbed to the top of the barrel with a ladder and almost fell in, which would have rendered her helpless. As she wrote to the Court: "To add to the horror of what would have happened to me, it was summer, and this metal tin can was directly under the sun. Essentially, I would have cooked alive at 9 years old. I immediately ran home to tell my mother of what had just happened to me, and the first thing that she said was, 'you know, that would be a great tool to use on someone. I could just leave them to die in there.'" She then went on ranting and laughing about how exciting it would be to dig a hole in the ground, stick the barrel in the ground, and leave someone in it to die. She then switched to the idea of using the silencer on people, and then filling the barrel up with the bodies."

Turning back to the "24" anecdote described above, Fluke-Ekren's desire to see suicide

bombings occur manifested itself again during the latter portion of the one year that she spent in Libya, and continued thereafter through her time in Syria. In Libya, Fluke-Ekren learned about a woman who was seeking to travel to Syria to conduct a suicide bombing. Fluke-Ekren befriended her and supported the woman's desire to leave Libya and conduct the attack. She then received a phone call from the woman, who told her that she would not conduct the bombing because she was now pregnant.

Instead of encouraging the woman to prepare for welcoming her child into the world, Fluke-Ekren told the woman "to not worry" and that she would join her in Syria to adopt the child so that her suicide bombing plans could proceed. As reflected in the PSR (§ 86 n. 9), that is exactly what happened, with Fluke-Ekren taking custody of the child in Syria following the terrorist attack. Fluke Ekren's daughter's account of these events is corroborated by another witness who was previously interviewed by undersigned counsel and the FBI.<sup>7</sup> During a visit to Fluke-Ekren's home in Syria in the summer of 2014, Fluke-Ekren told that witness that she was raising another child whose mother and father had both participated in a suicide bombing together in Syria on behalf of ISIS.

Fluke-Ekren and her second husband's involvement in the aftermath of the September 11, 2012 terrorist attack in Benghazi, Libya is described further below. After that horrific attack, Fluke-Ekren's second husband wanted to stay in Libya, settle down on the farm in which they were residing at the time, and continue his own business as a shoe salesman. According to

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<sup>7</sup> This witness is identified as "Witness-3" in the Statement of Facts in this case. Witness-3 pleaded guilty to a terrorism-related offense pursuant to a cooperation agreement. Witness-3 received a sentence reduction for cooperating with the government. Although Witness-3 did not initially disclose in 2014 that Witness-3 intended to travel to Syria to meet an ISIS member, Witness-3 has since provided truthful and reliable information that has been extensively corroborated by multiple forms of evidence. In the summer of 2014, Witness-3 also observed one of Fluke-Ekren's sons, who Fluke-Ekren said was approximately five or six years old at the time, holding a machine gun at Fluke-Ekren's residence in Syria.

Fluke-Ekren's daughter, he "was done with my mother's unusual hobbies" and "tired of this [terrorist] lifestyle." Fluke-Ekren responded by calling him a "p\*ssy" and attacking his masculinity for initially refusing to travel to engage in violent *jihad* in Syria given their belief at the time that Ansar al-Sharia was no longer conducting attacks in Libya and "there wasn't enough fun" for Fluke-Ekren there. As Fluke-Ekren's daughter stated, "being the weak man that he was," Fluke-Ekren's second husband "succumbed to her orders and took us to Syria."

#### ***7. Fluke-Ekren Travels to Syria and Initially Joins Jabhat al-Nusra***

After moving to Syria in or around late 2012 or early 2013, Fluke-Ekren joined Jabhat al-Nusra, another designated foreign terrorist organization. In doing so, Fluke-Ekren's daughter stated that her mother attempted to establish a military training program for a small group of young women and children. They were stationed in a Jabhat al-Nusra terrorist base, known as "Maqar al-Shams," which was an abandoned factory on the outskirts of Aleppo, Syria. The location was used for weapon storage and as a residence for the fighters' families.

Fluke-Ekren's daughter said that her mother "couldn't stand another minute of not being a bastard," and opted to begin training her on how to use an AK-47 assault rifle, M16, shotgun, suicide belt, and grenades for "both offensive and defensive" purposes. As she wrote, "In Libya I was taught that I was going to be killed if I didn't obey my mother, and now I was being taught to kill for my mother." PSR at page 46.

Fluke-Ekren used extreme forms of deception and manipulation to achieve her terrorist goals. She began organizing the kids on the base and teaching them basic English, such as the alphabet, to "ease them into the battalion plan" by instructing them first on innocuous subjects. Fluke-Ekren then attempted to get the mothers of the kids to assist her in transforming the main area of the factory section of the base into a training ground for the girls. According to Fluke-



Ekren's daughter, "[m]y mother said she wanted the training for the girls to be just like the propaganda videos [Jabhat al-Nusra] was making the men do." However, the parents were not on board with Fluke-Ekren's battalion idea at that time. Fluke-Ekren tried to get her second husband's assistance to obtain approval from Jabhat al-Nusra's leadership, as he was in a key position as a translator for the organization. They too would not approve of her program. Fluke-Ekren had to wait until joining the most lethal terrorist organization on the planet—ISIS—in order for her maniacal plans to gain acceptance.

***8. Fluke-Ekren's 10-Year-Old Daughter Falls Ill with Typhoid Fever in Syria while Forcibly Receiving Terrorist Military Training from Fluke-Ekren***

*"While she was training me, I got ill with typhoid fever. I was dying. Everything hurt. As the disease started eating away at me, I couldn't get up or move. I couldn't eat or drink. My ribs showed through my skin like a ladder. My stomach was sunken in like a bowl. My mother would still try to train me, but it got so bad that I couldn't obey her anymore. As I got closer and closer to death, my mind started to deteriorate. I couldn't hold onto a thought. I would lie down, eyes open and mind empty. It felt as though my sole purpose in life was to feel like sh\*t. I was 10, and I yearned for death. My nose would bleed all the time. I would have random seizures as my body started to collapse. My mother did nothing."*

Following Jabhat al-Nusra's rejection of her battalion-related endeavors, Fluke-Ekren left the base in or around early 2013 and focused her efforts on continuing to train her 10-year-old daughter "to be a child soldier" in Syria. As her daughter recounts in her letter, Fluke-Ekren "talked about how she wanted to torture me in the name of making me strong for the cause," and "how she wanted to waterboard me and leave me out for a couple of days for me to suffer."

Fluke-Ekren's daughter then contracted typhoid fever while the defendant was training her in Syria. She reported experiencing terrible pain, suffering, and difficulty breathing. She stated that she knew she was dying and thought about death often. She also indicated that Fluke-Ekren did not provide her with necessary medical care until she saw an opportunity to go to Turkey and use the illness to obtain more money from her second husband's family. "She knew

that [her second husband] had a soft spot for me, so she used that to her advantage by emphasizing that I could get proper care in Turkey.” Fluke-Ekren’s daughter recalled the terrible ordeal of trying to cross the Syrian-Turkish border while she was ill. “I had to walk miles through fields of land mines. I started having multiple seizures and just had to push through it. I had to hide from the Turkish military in tall grass while I was convulsing and keep quiet.”

Upon arrival in Turkey, Fluke-Ekren’s daughter was diagnosed with typhoid fever and the doctors told her they were surprised that she was still alive. She endured an extremely arduous recovery process, as she could not eat initially and had to train her body to accept food again. Notwithstanding her severe illness, Fluke-Ekren forced her daughter to cross the dangerous border multiple times during this period. On one occasion, Fluke-Ekren abandoned her in Syria to travel back to Turkey on her own, leaving her own daughter for about two weeks in a house with no heat and no food during the unforgiving winter season there. “I had no fat on my body to keep me warm. I relied on the warmth of my skin and bones to keep me alive.” When Fluke-Ekren returned, she found her daughter at a local Syrian civilian’s home, who was kind enough to invite her daughter in and feed her. “The first thing my mother said to me when she got back was, ‘You weren’t supposed to leave the house!’ Allison then went on to verbally insult my character for disobeying her holy orders. My mother then took me back to Turkey. I had to drag my weak frail body across the border yet again during winter. Again, I hide in the grass as the winter air carved into my face, crossed streams of ice water, and got my clothes caught in barbed wire. Why go to therapy when you can just toss your daughter around like a rag doll?”

#### ***9. Fluke-Ekren Flees Turkey and Reenters Syria for the Final Time Pre-Capture***

*“My mother uses fake crying to manipulate others all the time, exactly the way that she used anger on me to make me afraid. She uses emotions to manipulate others into feeling*

*what she wants them to feel. I know it's an act because all my life I have seen my mother portray sadness and intense emotions, but then as soon as she gets what she wants out of people and they leave, she switches right back into whatever she is truly feeling. I have never seen my mother genuinely cry in my life."*

In November 2013, while her family was residing in Turkey, U.S. Embassy officials in Ankara interviewed Fluke-Ekren in connection with U.S. passport application packets that she had submitted. During the interview, Embassy officials questioned Fluke-Ekren about her second husband and his whereabouts. Following the interview, Fluke-Ekren returned to her house and described this encounter to her daughter. Fluke-Ekren told her that she lied to and manipulated the interviewers by playing naïve and pretending to cry. Fluke-Ekren also stated that she "fooled them into thinking she was innocent, and that she blamed [her second husband] for everything." Fluke-Ekren's daughter recalled that her mother "made herself out to be a damsel in distress to the Americans. She laughed in joy to the thought of getting away with everything she had done."

The November 19, 2013 U.S. Department of State report of Fluke-Ekren's interview with Embassy officials, which Fluke-Ekren's daughter has never seen, corroborates her statements. In the report, the agent noted his in-person observations of Fluke-Ekren's demeanor, writing that Fluke-Ekren appears "to be withholding information based on her atypical non-verbals (extremely emotional throughout interview, crying, head in hands, hands covering face, limited eye contact, fidgeting with her baby), and potential delay tactics she employed while providing the limited pieces of information on Ekren's activities in Benghazi." Fluke-Ekren also explicitly told her daughter that when she left the Embassy, she was panicked that the American authorities were after her and her family, so she took her family and fled to Syria.

Beginning in Libya and continuing through Syria, Fluke-Ekren's daughter stated that the defendant consistently talked about wanting to conduct violent attacks. She noted that suicide

bombings were always a part of the defendant's plans, and she recalled the defendant stating, "It would be great to do something like 9-11." Throughout her time in Syria, Fluke-Ekren's continuously pursued establishing schools for women and children to teach extremist violent ideology and provide military training. In late 2016, the ISIS "Wali" of Raqqa approved the creation of the "Khatiba Nusaybah," which began operations on behalf of the terrorist organization in or around February 2017, with Fluke-Ekren serving the battalion's leader.

**B. Imposing the Statutory Maximum Sentence will Reflect the Seriousness of the Offense, Promote Respect for the Law, and Provide Just Punishment**

The seriousness of the offense conduct is set forth in detail throughout the nine-page Statement of Facts. *See* Dkt. No. 36. In sum, from in or about September 2011 through in or about May 2019, Fluke-Ekren engaged in extremely disturbing terrorism-related activities in several countries on behalf of multiple terrorist organizations. She was involved in the aftermath of the September 11, 2012 terrorist attack on the U.S. Special Mission and CIA Annex in Benghazi, Libya, during which four Americans were killed. There, she assisted with reviewing and summarizing the contents of stolen U.S. government documents, which were ultimately provided to the leadership of Ansar al-Sharia in Benghazi.

While living in Syria, Fluke-Ekren described to her own daughter, with specificity, her desire to conduct a widespread terrorist attack in the United States. *Id.* at 3. Fluke-Ekren told her daughter that "any attack that did not kill a large number of individuals to be a waste of resources" and that she wished external attacks elsewhere "had occurred on United States soil instead." *Id.* She also spoke to her daughter about learning how to make bombs and other explosives. *Id.* Separately, Fluke-Ekren discussed with an ISIS member from Central America her ideas for an attack involving the use of explosives on the campus of a U.S.-based college in the Midwest. And to an individual from the United States who was unlawfully smuggled into

Syria, Fluke-Ekren defended ISIS's ideology and explained why she did not wish to leave ISIS-controlled territory. In Iraq, Fluke-Ekren assisted ISIS personnel who were in charge of homes for widowed women whose husbands died while fighting for ISIS.

In or around February 2017, Fluke-Ekren became the leader of the “Khatiba Nusaybah”—a military battalion comprised of female ISIS members. *See* Dkt. No. 36 at 5-6. Over 100 women and young girls received military training from Fluke-Ekren in Syria on behalf of ISIS. *Id.* at 7. One of those children, some of whom were as young as 10 or 11-years-old, was her own daughter. During training sessions, Fluke-Ekren instructed the women and young girls on the use of AK-47 assault rifles, grenades, and explosive suicide belts. *Id.* at 6. While doing so, she sought to motivate her trainees by explaining how female fighters could help “ISIS expand and to remain” through the use of weapons and explosives, and that it was important to kill the *kuffar* (disbelievers) and die as martyrs on behalf of ISIS.<sup>8</sup> *Id.* at 7-8. Fluke-Ekren also told a witness that she never wanted to return to the United States and that she wanted to die in Syria as a martyr.

Fluke-Ekren's actions have demonstrated an utter lack of respect for the law. The following examples, which the government may discuss in greater detail during the sentencing hearing, illustrate that this Court should be extremely skeptical of any “mitigation” arguments offered by Fluke-Ekren in an effort to engage in revisionist history and seek a lower sentence.

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<sup>8</sup> For example, in the 100th issue of *al-Naba* (a former ISIS newspaper), which was distributed on or about October 5, 2017, ISIS urged women to fight on the battlefield alongside men in order to defend the terrorist organization. In the article, “The Duty of Women in Waging Jihad Against the Enemy,” the author explained that in the context of the war on ISIS, “it is mandatory for the Muslim women to fulfill their duty from all aspects in supporting the *mujahideen* [male fighters] in this battle, by preparing themselves as *mujahidat* [female fighters] in the cause of Allah, and readying to sacrifice themselves to defend the religion of Allah.”

1. Fluke-Ekren Attempted to Mislead this Court under Oath

As the Court will recall, during the June 7, 2022 plea hearing, the defendant explicitly stated: “Your Honor, just -- the only thing I would say is that we didn't intentionally train any young girls. They may have been in attendance, but I can't -- but --” This statement did not have a scintilla of truth to it. Fluke-Ekren intentionally began training her own daughter at 10-years-old, and continuously throughout her time in Syria until she was 15-years-old. Additionally, as the Court heard during the defendant’s plea hearing, the government has “turned over [to the defense] grand jury transcripts where these young girls, who were minors at the time, testified under oath that they did, in fact, receive military training from [the defendant].” Dkt. No. 37 at 32. All of them were intentionally trained by Fluke-Ekren herself, and they described her actions in detail, including taking them on practice shooting outings, showing them how to detonate grenades and suicide belts, and administering tests on what she taught them.

2. Potential Witness Intimidation/Tampering

Approximately six weeks after the defendant’s guilty plea, an individual who is closely connected to the defendant traveled to Kansas and appeared at the residences of Fluke-Ekren’s mother and father. This individual had never met Fluke-Ekren’s parents and was not invited to either residence. The individual stated that he was attempting to locate someone who is a witness in this case to have that person sign papers for the reasons stated in the PSR at ¶ 55. Neither parent provided the location of the witness to the individual connected to Fluke-Ekren, and both immediately reported these interactions to the FBI. The government has also learned that, on recorded jail calls (which have been disclosed to the defense), Fluke-Ekren previously informed this individual that the witness had testified against her during the investigative phase of this case. Fluke-Ekren also informed this individual that the witness provided information

about her terrorism-related conduct in Syria, which was based on Fluke-Ekren's review of discovery that is covered by the Protective Order entered in this case. The government has implemented certain security measures to protect the safety of this witness.

3. Fluke-Ekren Attempted to Mislead the U.S. Probation Officer

The defendant informed the assigned U.S. Probation Officer that she married her fifth husband in August 2019, divorced him in May 2021, and that after she left him, she was "at a crossroads" and "did not know she was wanted by authorities." PSR ¶¶ 107, 110. As described above, Fluke-Ekren believed she was wanted by authorities after her November 2013 interview at the U.S. Embassy in Ankara. The government also has recorded voice messages from Fluke-Ekren which indicate that she has known, or at least suspected, she was wanted by U.S. authorities since at least December 25, 2020. While Fluke-Ekren was evading justice overseas, her U.S.-based daughter voluntarily recorded phone conversations that she had with Fluke-Ekren from late 2020 through early 2021 to assist U.S. government authorities in locating her. The conversations took place over encrypted messaging platforms. Knowing that Fluke-Ekren would try to find her since it had been a few years since she left Syria and returned to the United States, her daughter created an undercover social media account to reestablish contact with her mother.

On or about December 25, 2020, Fluke-Ekren sent a message through a social media account to her daughter, stating: "I'm scared too, I'm wondering if maybe I'm talking to the FBI, I don't know. Please can you just send me a message."

Last year, on or about January 4, 2021, Fluke-Ekren explicitly asked her daughter on surreptitiously recorded call if she was wanted by authorities and quickly stated, "Of course I'm wanted." Her daughter then assuages her concerns by pretending that the FBI was only interested in retrieving American citizens that were in Syria and making her believe that they had

not asked about Fluke-Ekren for a few years, to which Fluke-Ekren responded, in part: “That’s good. That’s very good. And you’re doing great [daughter], I’m proud of you. You be smart right now.” Fluke-Ekren then told her daughter, “You’ll be fine the day that you come back here [to Syria]. And you come. You don’t belong there [in the United States].”

On or about January 6, 2021, Fluke-Ekren sent a voice message to her daughter stating, “I deleted a whole bunch of messages. I don’t know if they deleted for you too because I got scared.” Approximately two weeks later, on or about January 21, 2021, Fluke-Ekren stated the following in a voice message to her daughter: “Delete everything. Please delete everything before you go home. All these messages are really, really dangerous. Delete all the messages before you go home. These messages right here can get you and me and the kids and everybody in prison immediately.”

On or about January 24, 2021, Fluke-Ekren’s daughter asked her mother on a call that she was surreptitiously recording if Fluke-Ekren understood the importance of what she was doing, including leading the Khatiba Nusaybah ISIS battalion. Fluke-Ekren responded, in part, that she “would really much rather talk to you about these kinds of things when you are not there.” Later during the same call, Fluke-Ekren explained that she would have preferred to stay with her fourth husband—the ISIS military leader who was responsible for ISIS’s defense of Raqqa, Syria from 2017-2018. Fluke-Ekren explained that she was “devastated” when she left Raqqa, and that she “cried and begged” her fourth husband to let her stay there. Fluke-Ekren further stated: “And then when he said no, I begged. He said you have all these kids. I told him take my kids. Let me stay. He said no, you’re pregnant. And I, I mean I begged, literally crying was on my knees in front of him crying, begging him to let me stay” (emphasis supplied).

During the same January 24, 2021 recorded call, Fluke-Ekren told her daughter that “you



can't give up, because that's the only time that you lose." Fluke-Ekren explained that "you don't lose when somebody dies and you don't lose when you lose a place, and you don't lose when you lose people. You lose when you stop." Perhaps what is most illustrative about Fluke-Ekren's deeply committed terrorist mindset is what she stated at the end of this call, which the government intends to explain during the upcoming sentencing hearing: "And when you lose something because you were doing something that you believe in, like [her five-year-old son who died in Syria] for example or your Dad [her second husband], then you don't really feel regret. You don't feel regret. You feel sad but you don't, regret is like, you hate what you did or decisions that you made, but when you have your goal and you know what you're doing, and you keep moving towards that. You don't have regret. You might be sad about what Allah has written for you but not regret" (emphasis supplied).

#### 4. Fluke-Ekren Repeatedly Lied to the U.S. Government in January 2022

During her only post-arrest *Mirandized* interview with the U.S. government to date, Fluke-Ekren made a series of untruthful statements on January 28, 2022 in an attempt to disguise her terrorism-related conduct. She stated that she did not remember her second husband coming home with boxes, or anything else out of the ordinary, following the September 11, 2011 terrorist attack in Benghazi, which is in direct contradiction to the Statement of Facts. She stated that the father of her adopted child was her second husband, when in reality and as described above, she adopted the child after encouraging the mother to commit a suicide attack in Syria. She stated that one of her son's died in Syria after he contracted Meningitis, in direct contradiction to what she now told the assigned U.S. Probation Officer and what her daughter intends to describe about his death during the sentencing hearing. PSR ¶ 124. She stated that she had heard of the ISIS Women's Center in Raqqa, but she never went there. However, as agreed upon in the Statement

of Facts, Fluke-Ekren organized an effort to establish the Center and became its leader. The bottom line is that Fluke-Ekren will attempt any form of manipulation and deception to benefit her, until she is confronted with unimpeachable evidence.

5. Fluke-Ekren Now Claims that her 13-Year-Old Daughter “Chose” to Get Married to an ISIS fighter

It is shocking and offensive for Fluke-Ekren to claim that her daughter “chose” to get married to an ISIS fighter when she was merely 13-years-old. *See* PSR ¶ 101 n.12. Fluke-Ekren forced her daughter to marry an ISIS fighter following her second husband’s death to gain political leverage within ISIS in furtherance of her battalion-related goals.<sup>9</sup> As her daughter will painfully describe during her victim allocution at sentencing, the ISIS fighter then raped her.

**D. The Need to Afford Adequate Deterrence and Avoid Unwarranted Sentencing Disparities**

Given the extremely serious nature of this case, which has been closely followed in this district, nationwide, and around the world, the general deterrence value in imposing a statutory maximum sentence is significant. As this Court has recognized, “[p]art of a court’s sentence has to not only be to punish conduct, but it has to be to send messages, and in this case, I think given the totality of the facts, it’s very important for people to understand that if they intend to provide material support for a terrorist organization, at least in this district, there’s a very harsh penalty to be paid.” *See United States v. Young*, 818 F. App’x 185, 194 (4th Cir. 2020). No would-be ISIS military leader who is also considering manipulating and exploiting children should ever believe

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<sup>9</sup> According to Fluke-Ekren’s daughter, the period of mourning after the death of a woman’s husband is four months and ten days. During that time, a widow is very restricted in her activities. When the mourning period is over, a widow is under the purview of ISIS unless she marries again. Fluke-Ekren did not want to remarry yet because she did not want to risk that her new husband would not support her unyielding desire to organize and lead an ISIS battalion, which her second husband was firmly against. However, a son-in-law could speak for her and prevent her from being under the care of the ISIS administration, which explains why Fluke-Ekren threw her 13-year-old daughter into the hands an ISIS fighter.

that such reprehensible conduct would earn them anything less than the statutory maximum sentence. Additionally, a sentence below the maximum penalty in this case would cause additional fear and agony to Fluke-Ekren's victims.

As for specific deterrence, Fluke-Ekren had access to a phone and the internet during her eleven consecutive years that she spent committing terrorist acts abroad. The government does not have any evidence that she ever contacted any U.S. authorities to turn herself in. Instead, as the above-described recorded calls demonstrate, Fluke-Ekren was a fervent ISIS leader until the very end who "begged" to remain with the callous terrorist organization, even if it meant abandoning all of her children in Syria.

Furthermore, imposing the statutory maximum penalty in this case will certainly not lead to any unwarranted sentencing disparities given the sheer breadth, scope, and egregious nature of Fluke-Ekren's terrorist crime spree. Based on the conduct described throughout this memorandum and in the PSR, undersigned counsel is unaware of any 18 U.S.C. § 2339B case that was prosecuted in this Court (excluding those in which murders and/or deaths were charged),<sup>10</sup> or any other jurisdiction, that is even remotely comparable. This is the first defendant to have ever been prosecuted for serving as the leader of an ISIS battalion that trained over 100 women and young girls to commit terrorist attacks to ensure the Islamic State is kept alive by "helping ISIS expand and to remain" through the use of AK-47 assault rifles, grenades, and suicide belts packed with explosives. Imposing a sentence less than the statutory maximum penalty in this case could create unwarranted sentencing disparities if/when co-conspirators of

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<sup>10</sup> For example, El Shafee Elsheikh (1:20-cr-239-2), Alexandra Kotey (1:20-cr-239-1), and Mohammed Khalifa (1:21-cr-271) were all recently sentenced in this Court to life imprisonment, but in those cases, there was evidence of each defendant's role in the murder of numerous individuals on behalf of ISIS. Nonetheless, in this case, it is undeniable that Fluke-Ekren trained her students to kill on behalf of ISIS.

Fluke-Ekren's battalion face justice before this Court or elsewhere. Fluke-Ekren is the undisputed leader of a terrorist army that she created and cultivated.

This 42-year-old defendant is also among the eldest "material support" defendants to come before this Court, and is the eldest ISIS defendant to have ever been prosecuted in this district.<sup>11</sup> Additionally, unlike the vast majority of ISIS defendants who have been prosecuted, Fluke-Ekren successfully traveled to ISIS-controlled territory and committed crimes in Syria on behalf of ISIS from 2014 through in or around May 2019. And, as the Court knows from the Statement of Facts, Fluke-Ekren admitted to engaging in serious acts of terrorism on behalf of multiple terrorist organizations dating back to at least 2011. With the exception of only one other defendant, none of the other ISIS defendants who have been sentenced in this Court pursuant to a § 2339B charge, which did not involve murders or deaths, ever successfully traveled to ISIS-controlled territory and engaged in combat-related operations.<sup>12</sup> Additionally,

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<sup>11</sup> Cf. *United States v. Nicholas Young*, 1:16-cr-265, Dkt. No. 262 at 17 (The Court: "You were among our oldest defendants [38-years-old at the time of sentencing], a factor that courts can take into consideration in looking at disparate sentencing, whether somebody is a young offender or an older offender. Older people are expected to be a bit more mature in their approach to things, and you were among the oldest of the people on that list.").

<sup>12</sup> See, e.g., E.D. Va. ISIS defendants Mohamad Khweis (1:16-cr-143); Lionel Williams (2:17-cr-1); Ardit Ferizi (1:16-cr-42); Nicholas Young (1:16-cr-265); Ali Amin (1:15-cr-164); Mahmoud Elhassan (1:16-cr-64); Joseph Farrokh (1:16-cr-20); Haris Qamar (1:16-cr-227); and Mohamed Jalloh (1:16-cr-163). Khweis spent 2.5 months with ISIS, did not successfully train as a fighter or possess any weapons himself, and was initially sentenced to 20 years' imprisonment, before having his sentence reduced due in part to the Supreme Court's § 924(c)(3)(B)-related decision in *United States v. Davis*, 139 S. Ct. 2319 (2019). Williams and Ferizi were each sentenced to 20 years' imprisonment for different reasons, but neither defendant served as an ISIS leader nor did they travel to ISIS-controlled territory. To be clear, the government believes that both of those sentences were just and appropriate given the extremely serious conduct in which they engaged, but Fluke-Ekren is equally (if not more so) deserving of the statutory maximum sentence for the above-mentioned reasons. In other jurisdictions, ISIS defendants as young as 18 and 20-years-old were sentenced to the statutory maximum penalty of 20 years' imprisonment despite the fact that they were not ISIS leaders nor did they successfully travel to ISIS-controlled territory. See, e.g., *United States v. Bernard Augustine*, 1:18-cr-00393-SJ-RML (E.D.N.Y. 2022) and *United States v. Zakaryia Abdin*, 2:17-cr-00283-RMG (D.S.C. 2021), among others.

undersigned counsel is unaware of any other “material support” case in this Court that involved the defendant abusing her own children in furtherance of terrorist acts, or for any other purpose.

The statutory maximum sentence is justified and needed for this defendant, who engaged in exceptionally serious acts of terror across Libya, Iraq, and Syria for a span of at least eight years, planned attacks involving explosives against the United States, engaged in obstructive conduct, militarily trained over 100 women and young girls to kill others and themselves on behalf of ISIS, and placed her reverence for terrorism above her own children.

### **CONCLUSION**

*“My mother is a threat to all those incapable of fighting back. She is a threat to anyone she finds a chance to manipulate. She has the full responsibility and blood of the actions of [her second husband] on her hands. She has the blood, pain, and suffering of all of her children on her hands. I will never see most of my siblings again. Countless others have had their lives irrevocably worsened by her existence. I do not know of a single life improved by it. I know her and I know she wants to lie her way out of this, to get a slap on the wrist and try to use a sob story to once again get power and access to victims. Please, do not allow her to go free. She needs the maximum punishment, so that she can never again hurt anyone else.”*

*-Fluke-Ekren’s son, who plans to attend the sentencing*

*“My childhood is filled with memories of being cold, hungry, and dirty. I would get so hungry that I would chew on wood and eat grass to sooth the pain. I would find maggots in the crevices of my body, such as my belly button, from the filth I was left in. I would constantly have glass in my foot from my mother intentionally breaking it so that I would step on it. Accidentally drinking from a glass of bleach was a regular thing due to my mother intentionally leaving bleach in drinking glasses for me to find. My mother would find weaknesses in each of her kids and exploit them. Sometimes, Allison would even groom me into having weaknesses that she could use. My mother taught me to fear rape, and then she would molest me. Any time that I would disobey, Allison would break into hysteria, tears gushing from her eyes. My mother knew that I had a weakness for crying, and she used that against me . . . Your Honor, I would like to speak in court because I have more to say on the abuse and victimization Allison did to me while in ISIS. I want to give you a dynamic look at who Allison is. Your Honor, as Allison’s unloving daughter, I would also like to request that you give Alison the maximum sentence.*

*-Fluke-Ekren’s daughter, who intends to speak at sentencing*

For the foregoing reasons, the government respectfully asks the Court to impose the

statutory maximum sentence of 20 years' imprisonment. The government also submits that a life term of supervised release is necessary in this case to ensure the safety of the public in the Eastern District of Virginia and nationwide, the international community, and Fluke-Ekren's children, who continue to suffer from the horrifying acts of terror and abuse that she cruelly inflicted upon them.

Respectfully submitted,

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**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I hereby certify that on October 19, 2022, I electronically filed the foregoing with the Clerk of Court using the CM/ECF system, which will send a Notice of Electronic Filing (NEF) to all counsel of record in this case.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Raj Parekh  
First Assistant United States Attorney